



Attorney General Jon Bruning

NEWS RELEASE

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Syracuse Man Sentenced in Murder Case

(Lincoln, Neb) Attorney General Jon Bruning today announced that Ronald G. Smith, of Syracuse, was sentenced to 40-70 years in prison for Second-degree murder, 5-10 years in prison for Second-degree forgery and 5-10 years in prison for Theft in Otoe County District Court. The sentences will run concurrently with a mandatory release after 35 years.

“Mr. Smith tried to outrun justice after he committed a series of heinous crimes,” said Bruning. “Today’s sentence holds him accountable for his actions.”

Terri Harris, 51, was found dead on December 25, 2008 in her Syracuse home. The evidence showed that Smith confessed to pushing her to the ground in her bedroom and placing a pillow over her head until she suffocated to death.

Law enforcement later found Smith in Illinois after he had forged checks in Harris’ name at a Syracuse bank. He had stolen Harris’ car and cell phone. When police arrived, he barricaded himself inside a motel room.

Second-degree murder is a class IB felony which is punishable by 20 years to life in prison. Second-degree forgery and Theft are each class III felonies which carry a penalty of one to 20 years in prison and/or a \$25,000 fine.

Assistant Attorney General Corey O’Brien and Otoe County Attorney David Partsch handled the case.

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